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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.81 and Add.1)*]

55/254. Protection of religious sites

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/22 of 4 November 1998, 54/113 of 10 December 1999 and 55/23 of 18 November 2000, entitled "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations",

Recalling also its resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981, by which it proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and its resolution 55/97 of 4 December 2000 on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance,

Recalling further its resolutions 47/124 of 18 December 1992, 48/126 of 20 December 1993, 49/213 of 23 December 1994 and 51/95 of 12 December 1996, on the United Nations Year for Tolerance,

Bearing in mind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[2] and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] as well as the pertinent universal and regional human rights instruments,

Bearing in mind also the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949[3] and the Additional Protocols thereto, of 1977,[4] as well as the relevant provisions of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954,[5]

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[6] which emphasizes the need to counter intolerance and related violence based on religion or belief, including the desecration of religious sites,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.
[4] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.
[5] Ibid., vol. 249, No. 3511.
[6] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

Recalling also the appeal of the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000[7] to respect the diversity of belief, culture and language, to cherish differences within and between societies as a precious asset of humanity and to promote a culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations,

1. *Condemns* all acts or threats of violence, destruction, damage or endangerment, directed against religious sites as such, that continue to occur in the world;

2. *Calls upon* all States to exert their utmost efforts to ensure that religious sites are fully respected and protected in conformity with international standards and in accordance with their national legislation and to adopt adequate measures aimed at preventing such acts or threats of violence, and invites relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to those efforts by developing appropriate initiatives in this field;

3. *Encourages* all States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the media to promote, inter alia, through education, a culture of tolerance and respect for the diversity of religions and for religious sites, which represent an important aspect of the collective heritage of humankind;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to devote, in consultation with the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, attention to the issue of protection of religious sites in his forthcoming reports related to the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations;

5. *Decides* to continue consideration of the question of the protection of religious sites under the item entitled "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations".

101st plenary meeting
31 May 2001

[7] See resolution 55/2.